On Hysteria.

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Of Hysteria.

~~For the history of the symptoms of this disease, I refer you to Dr Sydenham, Sir Richd. Blackmore and Dr Cullen who have described them not only correctly, but with eloquence. It is an epitome, or concentration of all disease.~~

I shall briefly enumerate some of its most striking peculiarities and symptoms.

1 It is seated primarily in the nerves, muscles, alimentary canal, but rarely affects the blood vessels. In this respect only it differs from the Gout which affects the blood vessels with all those parts of the body which are affected by Hysteria, or perhaps it is more proper to say it is Gout in the form of muslin or tiffany instead of broad cloth, for it is brought on by the operation of most of the

V the cessation of the menses, but I have
once ~~found~~ seen it in two sisters, the
one but two, and the other but six years
old. It remarkable ~~its appears~~ were an
apparently robust constitution does not
protect women from it.

#3 The Hysteria appears in a chronic form without
intermissions

4 It appears in paroxysms with a perfect freedom
from all its symptoms in its intervals.
The paroxysms are more severe in this
case than when they are followed by the
chronic form of the disease.

causes that induce gout acting only upon the nervous, muscular & alimentary predispo-
-sitions. — ~~It affects the blood vessels, & called by~~ ~~the first settlement of new in-~~
~~called it "the plethoric"~~
-gland it was common to ascribe all anomalous diseases to witchcraft. ~~This was like manner is to~~ In modern times all
~~unknown to~~ anomalous diseases are ascribed to the gout

2 It affects women more than men, ~~in the proportion of ten to one~~ and ~~that~~ in con-
-sequence of the nerves, muscles & alimentary canal possessing more predisposition in women to be acted upon by irritants than the same parts in men. It appears chiefly between puberty, and

3 It appears in paroxysms, and with chronic ~~a chronic paroxysm without~~ symptoms in its intervals. ~~paroxysms.~~

~~4 It appears in paroxysms and with chronic symptoms in its intervals.~~

~~5 It appears in paroxysms, with a perfect~~

V likewise in appearing in paroxysms,
& in imperfect and perfect intermissions.

~~freedom from all its symptoms in its inter=~~
~~=vals. The paroxysms in this case are more severe~~
~~than when they are followed by chronic symptoms~~
You will perceive here a striking illus=
=tration of the Unity or Sameness of disease in
two different systems. The Hysteria you see
corresponds exactly to the fever in being accom=
=panied with paroxysms, remissions only,
and intermissions. It accords with the Gout
The mind under all the forms of Hysteria
that have been described is capricious, and
fickle and that to such a degree (to use the
words of Dr Sydenham) as to be constantly
in inconstancy. A disposition to weep and
laugh upon the most trifling occasions belongs
to the hysterical ~~constitution~~ predisposition. It is because
~~we see this so~~
children and old people possess so much of this
predisposition that they weep more readily &
easily than persons in adult life. A disposition

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to laugh ~~especially~~ upon occasions that ~~[illegible]~~ ought not to excite laughter belongs likewise to this ~~[illegible]~~ predisposition. ~~This proceeds~~ It is so deeply rooted in some people as to elude the command of their Wills, and to appear in places that do not accord with it. The Revd. Mr Duche formerly an eloquent & popular preacher in this city was so forcibly affected with this predisposition in the last years of his life, that he laughed at every thing he said or did. Even in middle life his Wife informed me he was often obliged to pinch himself severely in the pulpit, in order to prevent his laughing at some trifling object or idea that occurred to his eyes or his imagination.

I have said this disease rarely affects the blood-vessels. When it does, which is sometimes the case in its paroxysms, ~~it is~~ a suspension ~~of the faculties of the mind takes place in a transient fit of derangement.~~

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of ~~its~~ the hysterical Symptoms generally follows. This translation of the disease to the blood vessels may be known by the pulse. Dr Whyt mentions a case of this kind in a lady of 30 years of age who was affected with hysteria in whom the disease ceased as soon as her pulse became full & active. This change in her pulse was induced by a translation of ~~a~~ morbid excitement to the blood vessels of the brain, for she became at the same time ~~insanity~~ delirious. In mania ~~the symptoms of~~ preceded by hysteria ~~which~~ most & sometimes all its symptoms cease ~~and~~ with the coming on of that disease of the brain, and it is remarkable the Hysteria often returns with the cessation of madness. While I thus confine Hysteria to the nervous muscular & alimentary systems I beg you

V here between a fullness, and a convulsive action or fever in the blood vessels. The former often exists with all the Symptoms of Hys=
=teria. It has been called by Dr Cullen Hysteria plethorica.

would reflect that it sometimes blends itself with all the other Systems in the body. In a paroxysm of Hysteria every fibre of every System in the body is brought into convulsive Sympathy with the nervous muscular & alimentary Systems, and even in fevers of every kind, we sometimes meet with a disheartening & perplexing mixture of hysterical Symptoms. You will distinguish

7 The Hysteria is sometimes suspended by the coming on of a canine appetite for food, less than by the coming on of nausea, & from the same cause, — that is the absorption or attraction of the disease from its ordinary seats to the stomach.

8 It is distinguished from Epilepsy by not affecting the blood vessels, and by its paroxysms rarely affecting the regular exercises

V ~~in the Systemsitiing~~ and derived chiefly from the nerves which issue from the medulla Spinalis instead of ~~the~~ brain, ~~it might be called Spinal Epilepsy~~

7 M. Is being induced by corporeal as well as mental causes. Hippocondriasis is induced chiefly, or perhaps only by mental causes.

of the mind. In short it is Epilepsy in all the Systems except the blood vessels, ~~from the brain~~

9 It is distinguished from Hypocondriasis or Histerania

1 By depending upon mobility of the nervous System, that is a mixture of excess of sensibility & irritability. Hipocondriasis depends upon torpor or stupor, and sometimes upon a mixture of both in the nervous System.

2 By affecting men more than Women.

4 By the absence of the Globus hystericus & Dyspepsia.

5 By being worse in warm Weather, & most common in warm Climates.

6 By being attended only with transient alienation of mind & that rarely.

I have followed the nosologists in delivering these diagnostic marks of those two diseases of the nervous System, but take notice, they often blend their Symptoms with each Other, & they now & then alternate with each other. Hysteria sometimes moreover precedes, and

V There is some cases of hysteria a constant spirit of hippocondriac gloom, and in others a constant spirit of levity, ~~soll~~ which dis=
=covers itself in the body and mind being always primed for mirth or a fit of laughter.

against it succeeds Hypochondriasis. One more

The remote causes of Hysteria are corporeal & mental. The former are obstruction of the menses, or an inordinate flow of them — fluor albus, — an acid humor of any kind, worms & obstructed viscera, — strong drink, strong tea —. It is from the general use of the two last of these causes that it prevails as much in kitchens and in humble life, as in ~~the~~ the chambers of the ~~fas~~ higher ranks of Society. Its mental causes are anger, malice, envy, jealousy, and strong venereal desires.

Its exciting causes are the sudden operation of ~~any of~~ its remote causes, and in addition to these — offensive smells, impure air, fatigue, and the sudden emotions of terror, joy, and surprise.

The Hysteria is seldom a fatal disease ~~in~~ in its simple state, but from its frequent visits, ~~and~~ to other systems ~~it~~ and particularly to the viscera, it often brings on other diseases which terminate in death.

For a more complete history of one of its paroxysms and of its chronic symptoms I refer you to the writings of Dr Sydenham, Dr Cullen, and Sir Richard Blackmore. I shall give you a summary of one in order the better to enable you to understand the theory of the disease

The symptoms of a paroxysm of Hysteria are a rumbling noise in the belly, a sense of a globe ascending from the abdomen to the stomach and fauces, accompanied with a sense of strangulation – a cold sensation upon the crown of the head called Clavis hysterica, – a like sensation of cold along the back – coughing, screaming, sobbing, crying, convulsive motions of the limbs, or of the whole body, pitamus pale Urine, – sleepiness, syncope & apparent asphixia in which state the

patient sometimes lies for 10 or 15 minutes and then longer, and from which she emerges with crying, sobbing, convulsions in the limbs, clinched hands and teeth, & finally with a deep groan succeeded by stupor which closes the paroxysm.

Sometimes a paroxysm of Hysteria comes on with an exquisite pain in the head, back, stomach and bowels which extends after a while to the limbs, where it produces ~~a crucio~~ an hysterical Rheumatism which continues after the cessation of the fit for several days or weeks. ~~This~~ It differs from common Rheu=matism by affecting the skin, membranes & muscles only and never the joints, or liga=ments. —

Again — a paroxysm sometimes comes on with convulsions resembling Epilepsy, & a sudden swelling of the belly from which wind issues upwards & downwards with

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a great noise. These Symptoms are succeeded by more or less of the Symptoms before descri=
=bed. —

The Symptoms of a Chronic Hysteria, or of imperfect intermissions are head Ach, Ver=
=tigo, flatulency, Colic, Cholera morbus, Cough Dyspnoea, palpitation of the heart, Ischuria, Lumbago, Rheumatism, coldness of the feet, crown of the head and back; Swellings of the face, throat & legs resembling Dropsy, but differing from them in being transient, & in being most obvious in the morn=
=ing instead of the evening — a salivation, numbness of the limbs, & sometimes palsy and apoplexy. Epi=
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All these Symptoms are more or less painful & disturbing according to the greater, or less degree in which the Hysteria invades other Systems, besides

4 The Hysteria appears in a chronic form without paroxysms.

5 It appears in paroxysms, but with a perfect freedom from all its symptoms in its intervals. The paroxysms in this case are more severe than when they are followed by the chronic form of the disease.

the nerves, and particularly the blood vessels. All these diseases differ from diseases of the same name only by making a more feeble impression upon the parts in which they are seated. They resemble ~~pain pictures~~ paintings with water colors instead of oil. ~~in a more work~~ It is only when they extend to the blood vessels & substance of the viscera, they ~~are~~ may be said to be ~~stamped~~ fixed with oil colors upon the system.

I said formerly in treating upon the nervous system, that sympathies were more prompt and extensive between the different parts of the nerves, than any other of the sys=tems of the body. This accounts for the gre=t variety of convulsions in them when they are diseased. They have been compared to the agitations of the ocean of the East Wind.

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~~Diseases which terminate in~~ death. ~~The Diseases~~ ~~thus induced partake of all the properties~~ the same nature ~~as if they had been brought on by other causes,~~ ~~and require the same treatment.~~

The Remedies for this disease divide themselves into two parts.

I Such as are proper in its paroxysms. &

II Such as are proper in its intervals, or when it exists without paroxysms.

To the 1st head belong

1 Bleeding when the pulse is full, or when there is reason to believe the system is plethoric. This is generally the case when it occurs in women in whom the menses have been recently obstructed, and in ~~poo~~ women of good appetites. It is the more necessary if the brain and reason be affected.

2 The pediluvium. 3 Garlic or mustard to the

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4 Stimulating and opening Injections. A So=
=lution of Asafetida in Water, also Liquid Am=
=monia are in some Cases useful Additions
to them.

5 As a great deal of the pain of a patient arises
from Air sent up in the bowels, it should be
discharged by fixing a Glyster pipe in the Anus.
Such is the force of the ~~force of the~~ retrograde motion of
the intestines, that the Spincter ani has been
known to snap off the pipe, and to draw it
several inches up the bowels.

6 Stimulating Odors applied to the Nose such
as Spirit of hartshorn, burnt feathers, and
Asafetida. A physician in New England after
having tried the above Odors to no purpose, pulled
off his boot, and applied his ~~foot~~ toes smoaking
with the ~~foetid~~ fœtid sweat of his feet to the nose of
his patient. He immediately recovered. The

more common odors had probably lost their effects from habit.

If all these remedies should fail, and the disease should assume as it sometimes does the form of asphixia

7 Cold water should be thrown upon the face, or dropped upon the upper lip. and & the soles of the feet, and nostrils should be tickled. These feeble stimuli often do service, after more powerful ones have been used to no purpose.

9 Liquid Laudanum combined with the tinct=ure of Asafoetida should be given as soon as the patient is able to swallow. Flour & water have been found useful in discharging wind from the stomach.

II The Remedies proper to be administered in the intervals of the disease should be regulated

V It will be highly proper to begin the cure by the removal of all its remote & exciting causes. —

by the state of the System? If the blood vessels are plethoric, or if there is ~~is~~ reason to believe the disease has been induced by an acrid humor of any kind irritating the bowels primarily, and the nerves by sympathy, or the nerves primarily, the Remedies should be occasional bleeding, and abstemious diet in the former case, and a diet consisting of ~~Milk~~ or Milk & Rennet Whey in the latter. Dr Sydenham cured an obstinate case of ~~Milk~~ Hysteria by ~~a~~ a Milk diet, and Dr Lipot a similar one by Rennet Whey. The same simple and mild diet is ~~likewise~~ equally proper in those cases in which the nerves are too irritable to bear the stimulus of any other kind of food. I am satisfied that we often fail of curing Hysteria from inattention to the three causes of it which have been mentioned.

In cases where the intervals between the paroxysms are not accompanied with

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any diseased Actions in the Nerves, and Other
Seats of the Hysteria, the Remedies should be
2dly Tonics. These should be the cordial gums,
such as Asafoetida, Galbanum, Myrrh, and Sac
-gapenum. The Asafoetida is the most active
of them. It may be given in pills, tincture or
watery infusion.
2 Bitters of all kinds. I have not found Bark
as useful in giving tone to the nervous System
as might be expected. Its tonic Virtues are
felt chiefly by the Arterial System.
3 Certain metals. These are the common preparations
of Iron, Copper Zinc and lead. Iron in large
Doses is perhaps preferable to any of them.
It is particularly useful when the Disease
is occasioned, or accompanied with Worms.
4 Stimulating applications to the belly, such
as the volatile Liniment, Spirit of Turpen
-tine & Sweet Oil, and plasters of Asafoetida,

v same Applications to the Spine.

galbanum, and Burgundy pitch. Also the
5 Bandages bound tight around the belly &
limbs. They give tone to the muscular system.
I have twice known them used with great
advantage. They were first suggested by Ver=
=written.
6 a cordial diet consisting chiefly of salted meat,
with vegetables, and a moderate quantity of
white wine or porter. The low & acid wines
and oxeids of all kinds should be avoided.
They all tend to destroy the ~~sensibility and~~ natural contrac=
~~to induce a morbid~~ =tility of the nervous system,
and to induce in it a morbid irritability.
7 Exercise especially on horseback & labor. The
latter is a radical remedy in this disease. Hun=
=dreds of women who have been compelled
to labour in consequence of being reduced in
~~their~~ circumstances have been cured by it.

V Lady Rachel Russel was cured of an hys-
-terical head ach of long standing by the
grief which followed the execution of her
much beloved husband Lord Wm Russel.

Remember in the use of all these remedies to attend frequently to the pulse. all the above tonic remedies will be hurtful ~~except the~~ unless they are given in a relaxed ~~state~~ state of the arterial system, or in other words when the nerves & blood vessels are not plumbed with each other. When the pulse from any cause becomes and the patient feverish, excited, leave off your tonics until by bleeding or purges or low diet you have reduced it ~~to~~ them to a par of excitement with the nerves. & the excitement of some steady passion. Hard grief by fixing the mind to one subject have often cured Hysteria. I have several times known it cured by the death of a child in an hysterical mother. Dr Cullen used to tell his pupils that the Hysteria was scarcely known in Scotland during the Rebellion in the year 1745 for during that time every woman in the

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Country was under the influence of fear for the fate of a husband, a son or a brother in the Royal or rebel Army. But where it is impracticable or unsafe to excite these steady passions, some steady pursuit ~~way~~ or employ=
=ment may be substituted in their room.
I once heard the Revd Mr Whitefield say that the wife of an Apothecary in London was per=
=fectly cured of Hysteria by ~~to~~ ~~wanting a~~ laboring a
member of his Church. The principles and duties of ~~th~~ his Society ~~dissipated~~ by the force of their impression ~~of~~ ~~upon her system~~ dissi=
=pated all impressions of a more public nature and thus gave tone to her nervous system. Religious duties and ceremonies of all kinds are calculated to have the same effect. They act upon the body thro' the medium of the mind. But domestic duties and exercises are happily calculated to ~~produce~~ impart a similar

9 tone to the nervous system. A Diary, a garden, a kitchen, a nursery, a domestic manufactory or care of any kind ~~of any kind, shall be~~ are all powerful remedies for this disease. ~~Care of any kind is a medicine~~ A lady in this city who was much afflicted with hysteria from the want of employment, once asked a sensible female friend, "what she should do to get rid of all her diseases and distresses"? "go (said she) and fall down upon your knees & ask the Almighty ~~to~~ for some real trouble, and that will cure you of all your imaginary diseases and distresses".

9 a change of climate. A cold climate should be preferred to a warm one.

10 matrimony if our patient be single. I am aware this remedy is forbidden by Dr Tipot, ~~Lagrek~~, and Mandevill, but it must have been in women ~~too~~ debilitated ~~to~~

below the power of that, or perhaps any other remedy. I have known it produce the most salutary effects, and more especially where it has been followed by Childbearing. ~~for the~~ ~~-tion of this function~~ This will easily be understood when you reflect how much the Arterial disease of pregnancy attracts morbid excitement from the nervous System. Few women who bear Children are ever troubled with this disease. —

A long and faithful perseverance for months & even years, in the Use of all the Remedies that have been mentioned is indispensably necessary to cure the Hysteria. In Short our business is not so much to cure a disease, as to change the Constitution by removing its predisposition to it. It is in this way it is sometimes cured by time without the aid

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of medicine of any kind, but it much oftener ends in Hypocondriasis by the nerves wea=
=ring themselves down from a laxous to a stricture state. Sometimes it terminates in organic diseases which it only counterfeits for a while, such as palsy, apoplexy, epilep=
=sy, madness, Hydrocephalus internus, Hepaticula, pulmonary Consumption, and Dropsy. ~~Lobon~~ It is common to apply the epithet hysterical to these diseases, but this is improper, for no sooner ~~the~~ do they make their appearance than the hysteria generally ceases. It should be considered as the remote cause only of all those organic diseases, and they should all be treated as if they had originated from more ordinary causes.